

FINAL

BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

There was a regular meeting of the Bloomfield Town Council held at 7:30 p.m. on Monday, June 13, 2016 in Council Chambers, Bloomfield Town Hall, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT.

Present were: Mayor Joan Gamble, Councilors Joseph Merritt, Patrick DeLorenzo, Wayne Hypolite, Joel Neuwirth, Derrick Seldon, Leon Rivers and Joseph Washington

Also present were: Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager, Sharron Howe, Assistant to the Town Manager, William Hogan, Director of Finance, Cindy Coville, Human Resource Director, Jose Giner, Director of Planning and Economic Development, Yvette Huyghue-Pannell, Director of Senior Services, Attorney Marc Needelman and India M. Rodgers, Clerk of Council

Absent was: Deputy Mayor Schulman

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ANNOUCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS

Mayor Gamble requested a moment of silence for the victims of the Orlando Nightclub shooting in Florida.

Mayor Gamble also recognized Councilor Neuwirth for his efforts in planning and organizing Celebrate Bloomfield. She thanked the town staff and administration for their time and participation.

CITIZENS STATEMENTS & PETITIONS

1. **Linda Pagani, 4 Guernsey Road** stated her support of the Prosser Public Library project and it to remain at the existing site, 1 Tunxis Avenue. She also stated that she is an avid patron of the library and stated the importance of this building as a cornerstone in the Town Center.
2. **Tim Wolf, 4 Guernsey Road** stated his support of the Prosser Public Library renovation project of the existing site. He also noted that the current building site is one of the older architecture left in the town center.
3. **Lucille Morrisse, 17 Arnold Drive** is the Co-Chair of Commission on Aging. She expressed her advocacy for Centerbrook Architects Human Services building report at 330 Park Avenue. Mrs. Morrisse reiterated the need for a new building/renovation due to building codes, air quality, American Disability

Association codes, ceiling leakage, and HVAC issues. This buildings should be safe and comfortable location for seniors.

4. **Ayse Ozkaya, 56 Filley Street**, expressed her discontentment regarding tax abatement concerns to Niagara Bottling Company. She also requested a status update for the environmental impact study for Niagara Bottling Company.
5. **Joe Suggs, 10 Sandpiper Drive** expressed concerns regarding the appearance of various buildings along the southern entrance of Blue Hills Avenue. He noted several improvements in the areas such as: VFW building which is privately owned.
Mr. Suggs mentioned the quality of life for residents in this area such as: P. Faith McMahon Wintonbury branch library, tennis courts and basketball court renovation in the Blue Hills corridor.

Mr. Suggs also addressed concerns regarding minority owned business as they relate to a comprehensive review of Affirmative Action efforts for the town in the past. On November 27, 2006, per Council minutes, Council voted and approved a set-aside resolution for a minimum of 30%, excess of \$5M (new capital improvement projects), adding local Bloomfield minority business enterprises, and publicly funded projects for expressed interest of the Minority Construction Council.

The following individuals expressed concerns regarding construction bid opportunities for minority owned business, within the Town of Bloomfield. All of the individuals listed below are members of the Minority Construction Council (MCC). There are a wide array of construction specialty areas interested in working on new builds or renovations for commercial projects. Members of the MCC requested Council to consider the 30% set aside for minority owned businesses:

- Rick Rowe, 6 Clover Lane
- Joslyn Chance, 544 Bloomfield Avenue
- Rollo Jones
- Ken Murphy, 98 Wadhams Road
- Julian Alleyne, 16 Revere Road
- Oshun Vincent
- Michael Gallimore, 6 Jeffrey Lane
- James Hopkins

REPORT FROM COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES

Community Services – Councilor Seldon gave a brief report of the last meeting held on June 7, 2016.

Administration & Education – Councilor Rivers gave a brief report of the last meeting held on June 6, 2016.

Golf – Councilor Rivers stated that the golf course is doing very well with increased rounds of play. The honorary dinner for Anika Noni Rose was held during events for Celebrate Bloomfield. Golf Management is making every effort for community involvement; to attract residents to participate.

Finance – The next meeting of this subcommittee will be held on Monday, June 20, 2016 at 5:45 p.m. This meeting will focus on an update regarding debt service with the town's financial advisors, the May financial report, increased revenues in several areas, real estate conveyance and building permit activity.

ADDITION TO THE AGENDA

It was moved by Councilor Washington, seconded by Councilor Rivers and voted unanimously to add agenda item **FY 15/16-81: Consider and Take Action Regarding Appointment to Bloomfield Housing Authority.**

COUNCIL BUSINESS

OLD BUSINESS

FY 13/14-12: Consider and Take Action Regarding the Sale of 97 Granby Street

It was moved by Councilor Hypolite, seconded by Councilor Merritt and voted unanimously to accept the proposal of Kong Real Estate LLC and direct Staff and the Town Attorney to negotiate a purchase and sale agreement.

Councilor Neuwirth inquired about utilizing the property for staging area during renovations to be completed on Granby Street.

Councilor Merritt inquired about the market value of the property at 97 Granby Street. It was noted that the property is valued at approximately \$80,000.

Councilor Seldon asked about the use of the property for a parking lot adjacent to the new restaurant proposal. The town will not receive any compensation while the project is complete.

Councilor Hypolite inquired about the length of delaying the abutters' project. The goal is to complete the project with this construction season. Once the sales and purchase agreement has been negotiated, the project will commence. He also commended this small business owner for this purchase and his diligence.

Mr. Philip K. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager stated that the town spent \$45,000 for remediation and it was corrected to \$120,000 in market value from the current Assessor card.

FY 14/15-19: Consider and Take Action Regarding the Human Resource Consortium (HRC) Affirmative Action Plan

Councilor Rivers gave a brief background of the recommendations from the Administration and Education Subcommittee last meeting held on June 6, 2016. He also stated his recommendation of utilizing an Ombudsman to monitor this plan.

Councilor Hypolite expressed his gratitude for the written Affirmative Action Plan, however it is limited by federal statutes and regulations. He commended all of those involved in the creation of this plan.

Councilor Hypolite also noted that policy, procedures and practice, employment should reflect the diversity of community, not the State of Connecticut general demographics.

Councilor Washington stated that the Affirmative Action Plan is a very well thought out plan. However, he would like to narrow the focus to Bloomfield.

Councilor Merritt echoed comments of colleagues referencing that this plan does not go far enough to meet the goals of Bloomfield as its own demographic and community. He stated that the town and Council need to be aware and supportive of AA efforts.

Councilor Seldon requested the need to have someone independently to monitor this program.

Councilor DeLorenzo indicated that the current consultants, HRC role was to ensure monitoring of the Affirmative Action plan as a third party entity. It was noted that stricter requirements on the reporting process.

Mr. Schenck, Jr. stated that the HRC and Town Council can begin discussions in the Administration and Education Subcommittee to determine a monitoring model. Currently, HRC will report progress and status updates of set goals on a quarterly basis to ensure process and procedures are appropriate.

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth to approve the Town of Bloomfield Affirmative Action Plan.

**VOTE: AYE: J. Gamble, W. Hypolite, L. Rivers, D. Seldon, J. Merritt, J.
 Neuwirth, P. DeLorenzo
 NAY: None
 ABSTAIN: J. Washington**

The motion carries, 7-0-1

Councilor Rivers stated that this plan does not provide any protection for non-union individuals.

Councilor Washington requested a review for further clarification to encompass all individuals.

Councilor Hypolite requested clarification to have an ombudsman and stated that the bar has been set too low.

FY 15/16-60: Consider and Take Action Regarding the Town Facility Use Policy

It was moved by Councilor Seldon, seconded by Councilor Hypolite and voted unanimously to approve the Town Facility Use Policy.

Mr. Dave Melesko, Director of Leisure Services highlighted the requested changes from the last Administration and Education Subcommittee meeting held on June 6, 2016.

There were changes made to Fees for Priority groups. In Group #3, concerns were expressed by subcommittee members for charging fees to the following:

- Group #3 – Civic groups, Town of Bloomfield youth sports leagues (defined as at least 50% of participants from Bloomfield, open tryouts, and all participants are allowed to play), youth organizations, and volunteer community organization.

It was noted that the Town can reserve the right to charge fees to cover costs incurred by the town or services requiring extra personnel costs; such as custodial help, police or technicians, will be billed to the permit holder.

- Group #4 – Resident use and Community Non-profit organizations

It was also noted that the Town would charge a nominal fee for the use of the town facilities by approved charitable, philanthropic, or cultural groups, service clubs, and other organizations not operating for profit and devoted to community interest and child welfare.

NEW BUSINESS

FY 15/16-77: Consider and Take Action Regarding Adoption of Resolution (Amend Mill Rate for Motor Vehicles: Senate Bill 502)

It was moved by Councilor Hypolite, seconded by Councilor Seldon and voted unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Bloomfield Town Council adopted its budget and mill rates for FY 2016/2017 on May 2, 2016, based upon the expectation of certain actions by the Connecticut State Legislature regarding the authority to tax motor vehicles and the reimbursement by the State of Connecticut of revenue lost by the Town caused by a change in the taxation of motor vehicles; and

WHEREAS, the State Legislature adopted the State budget contrary to the expectations that were relied upon by the Town in establishing the budget and mill rate for FY 2016-2017; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 502 requires that municipalities which set their FY 2016-2017 motor vehicle rate at 32 mills prior to passage of the State budget bill to instead set their motor vehicle mill rates at the mill rate they previously set for real and personal property other than motor vehicles for the 2015 assessment year; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 502 authorizes the Town to adjust its motor vehicle mill rate “administratively” through action by its Town Council.

Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the mill rate for motor vehicles located within the Town for the 2015 assessment year (FY 2016-2017) shall be 36.65 per \$1,000.00 taxable value.

Mr. William Hogan, Finance Director gave a brief background of the resolution regarding amending the mill rate for motor vehicles.

Councilor Hypolite stated that the town will not heavily rely on difference from the State once this amendment is made.

The town initially loss \$750,000 State of Connecticut grant, however the more recent amount is now is approximately \$500,000 - \$550,000. The town is expected to receive \$450,000 grant for motor vehicles.

FY 15/16-78: Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Adopting a Plan for Holding Absentee Landlords Responsible for the Conditions of their Property

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Hypolite and voted unanimously to refer to the Administration and Education subcommittee for further discussion.

FY 15/16-79: Consider and Take Action Regarding Tax Refunds

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Hypolite to approve tax refunds.
(See the attached list)

FY 15/16-80: Consider and Take Action Regarding Adoption of Resolution (Tax Suspense List)

It was moved by Councilor Rivers, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to adopt the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Bloomfield Council hereby authorizes transfers in the amount of \$387,389.99 to the Suspense Tax Book for the years listed (2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014). This action is being taken upon the recommendation of the Tax Collector and as shown in a reported dated June 8, 2016. (See attached list)

FY 15/16-81: Consider and Take Action Regarding Appointment to the Bloomfield Housing Authority

It was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Neuwirth and voted unanimously to reappoint Mrs. Elba Schulman, 8 High Ledge Road to the Bloomfield Housing Authority with term ending June 30, 2021, disclosure required.

Financial Report

There were no concerns or inquiries regarding the financial report.

Mayor's Report

On June 26, 2016, Mayor Gamble encouraged all residents to attend the Mayor's Brunch at the Wintonbury Hills Golf Course.

Mayor Gamble also stated that Celebrate Bloomfield was such a success!

Town Manager's Report

Mr. Schenck, Jr., Town Manager reported the following updates to the Town Council:

- Reconcile budget dilemma, tax bills sent out, due at the end of July
- Marcus Garvey sign done completed and will be installed in the near future
- CCM prescription drug program is still accepting individuals with assistance for medication. Contact Social & Youth Services for more information.
- Gillette Ridge will reopen in the next 30-45 days

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor DeLorenzo thanked Councilor Neuwirth for a successful Celebrate Bloomfield. He also encouraged residents to participate with Summer Concerts on the Green. In addition, Councilor DeLorenzo reminded residents to support the Bloomfield Food Bank.

Councilor Rivers commended the Bloomfield High School Girls and Boys Track Team Awards benefit - \$500,000 scholarship to Bloomfield students.

Councilor Seldon commended town staff in assisting with the development of the Affirmative Action Plan, also look at minority set asides – move forward to ensure an opportunity

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:27 p.m., Council entered into Executive Session B. – Discussion Concerning Personnel Matter with the Town Manager, Assistant to the Town Manager, Town Attorney and Human Resources.

At 9:45 p.m., Council exited Executive Session B.

At 9:46 p.m., Council entered into Executive Session A. – Discussion Concerning Personnel Matter.

At 9:55 p.m., Council exited Executive Session A.

At 9:56 p.m., Council entered into Executive Session C. – Discussion Concerning Pending Claims and Litigation.

At 10:03 p.m., it was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Rivers and voted unanimously to exit Executive Session C, enter into Regular Session and add agenda item FY 15/16-82: Discussion Concerning Personnel Matter

At 10:04 p.m., it was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Washington and voted unanimously to adopt Option 2 (Pay the pension going forward beginning on the 1st of the month following the request for benefits with a lump-sum payment plus interest for the amount the participant would have collected beginning at the normal retirement date through the date the pension payments actually begin).

At 10:05 p.m., it was moved by Councilor Merritt, seconded by Councilor Washington to enter into Executive Session D. – Discussion Concerning Employee Evaluation – Town Manager.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10:10 p.m., meeting adjourned.